

**REMARKS**

In the Office Action, dated August 25, 2004, the Examiner rejects claims 1, 5, 7-21 and 25 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application publication No. 2003/0119460 A1 (hereinafter "ZIPPER") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,754,470 (hereinafter "HENDRICKSON"). Additionally, the Examiner rejects claims 2-4 and 26-38 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over ZIPPER in view of HENDRICKSON and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,055,733 (hereinafter "HOLSINGER"). Furthermore, the Examiner rejects claims 22 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over HOLSINGER in view of ZIPPER. Also, the Examiner rejects claims 6 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over ZIPPER in view of HENDRICKSON and HOLSINGER and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,690,947 (hereinafter "TOM"). Reconsideration of the outstanding rejections of pending claims 1-28 is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.


In rejecting claims 1-28 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), in paragraphs 2-5, the Office Action cites ZIPPER as either a primary reference or a secondary reference. Applicants note, however, that ZIPPER has a filing date of December 26, 2001, which is subsequent to the November 21, 2001 filing date of the present application. ZIPPER, therefore, cannot be properly applied against the claims of the present application. Without the alleged teachings of ZIPPER, the remaining references applied by the Examiner do not disclose all of the features of the claims and, therefore, the Office Action has failed to make out a *prima facie* case of obviousness. Withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1-28 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is, thus, respectfully requested.

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this response other than as reflected on the enclosed Fee Transmittal. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 18-1945, under Order No. BBNT-P01-121 from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: December 21, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

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